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CITY OF LOMITA

HOUSING ELEMENT OF THE GENERAL PLAN

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City planning Lomita
Housing "

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INTRODUCTION

Since Lomita's incorporation in 1964, the city's elected officials and administrators have taken many actions to improve and protect the local environment. One of the first actions of the City Council was the adoption in December, 1966 of the Lomita General Plan, which established goals and policies to guide and coordinate overall future development. The present zoning and subdivision ordinances, adopted in 1970 and 1971 respectively, provided the means for carrying out General Plan recommendations in the critical area of land use.

Housing is central to the quality of life enjoyed by present and future Lomita residents. In recognition of the importance of this area of planning, the California State Legislature has amended Section 65302 of the Health and Safety Code to require a housing element in all cities' general plans. This legislation first became effective in 1969 and now provides that by July 1, 1972 all California general plans shall include:

> "A housing element consisting of standards and plans for the improvement of housing and for the provision of adequate sites for housing. This element of the plan shall endeavor to make adequate provision for the housing needs of all economic segments of the community."

Additionally, federal regulations require the inclusion of a housing element as a prerequisite to several programs financed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The housing element guidelines are similar in both the state and federal regulations and generally consist of certain basic parts, as follows:

1. Goals and objectives to alleviate current and future housing problems.

2. An outline of housing conditions, problems and needs: both present and future.

3. Review of obstacles affecting the solution to housing problems.

4. A program involving solutions to be undertaken in relation to housing.

5. Implementation actions which are necessary to reach the city's housing objectives and help to solve housing problems.

6. Procedures to review and evaluate the city's progress in improving its housing stock and updating its housing element.

State law and housing element guidelines stress implementation and solution of housing problems as the most important part of the housing plan. In the preparation of this element, every attempt has been made to use the most recent available statistical information. For those data items not yet available from the 1970 Federal Census, appropriate substitutions have been utilized.

Lomita's housing situation will continue to change year by year. Such changes, undoubtedly, will require modifications in the objectives and programs included in this initial housing element. Therefore, plans should be made for periodic updating of the housing element.

PROFILE OF THE CITY

Pleasantly situated at the base of the Palos Verdes Hills, Lomita is one of the smallest cities in the county. Its 1.87 square mile area may be divided into three parts. The portion of the city south of Pacific Coast Highway, called in part "Lomita Pines", presents a rolling topography and is covered with many mature trees. Somewhat visually distinct but still a significant part of the southern portion of Lomita is the area adjoining Palos Verdes Drive North. This section contains a recently developed housing tract and shopping center, along with a 301 unit public housing project. The central section of the city, bounded by Pacific Coast Highway on the south, Lomita Boulevard on the north and the city boundaries on the east and west, is generally flat and contains much of the city's mixed land use and large lots. North of Lomita Boulevard, the remainder of the city is largely residential and has in parts an almost rural atmosphere due to the large lots, lack of sidewalks and equestrian uses.

The area which is now the City of Lomita experienced its most rapid growth during the decade 1950-60, when population grew by 140% to nearly 15,000. During the 1960's, accessible vacant land rapidly disappeared and the city's growth rate slowed. Population grew by about 32%, reaching a 1970 total of 19,784.

A population profile reveals Lomita residents tend to be fairly youth (See Figure I). The median age in 1970 was 28.5 years, but the city does contain nearly 1,900 individuals aged 65 or older. There is a small racial minority population in Lomita, which in 1970 included 29 Negroes,45 Indians, and 498 individuals of other races. In 1960, the most recent year for which information is available, the census reported nearly 800 individuals of Spanish surname (5.3% of the population) and slightly over 1,000 residents of foreign birth (6.7% of the population).

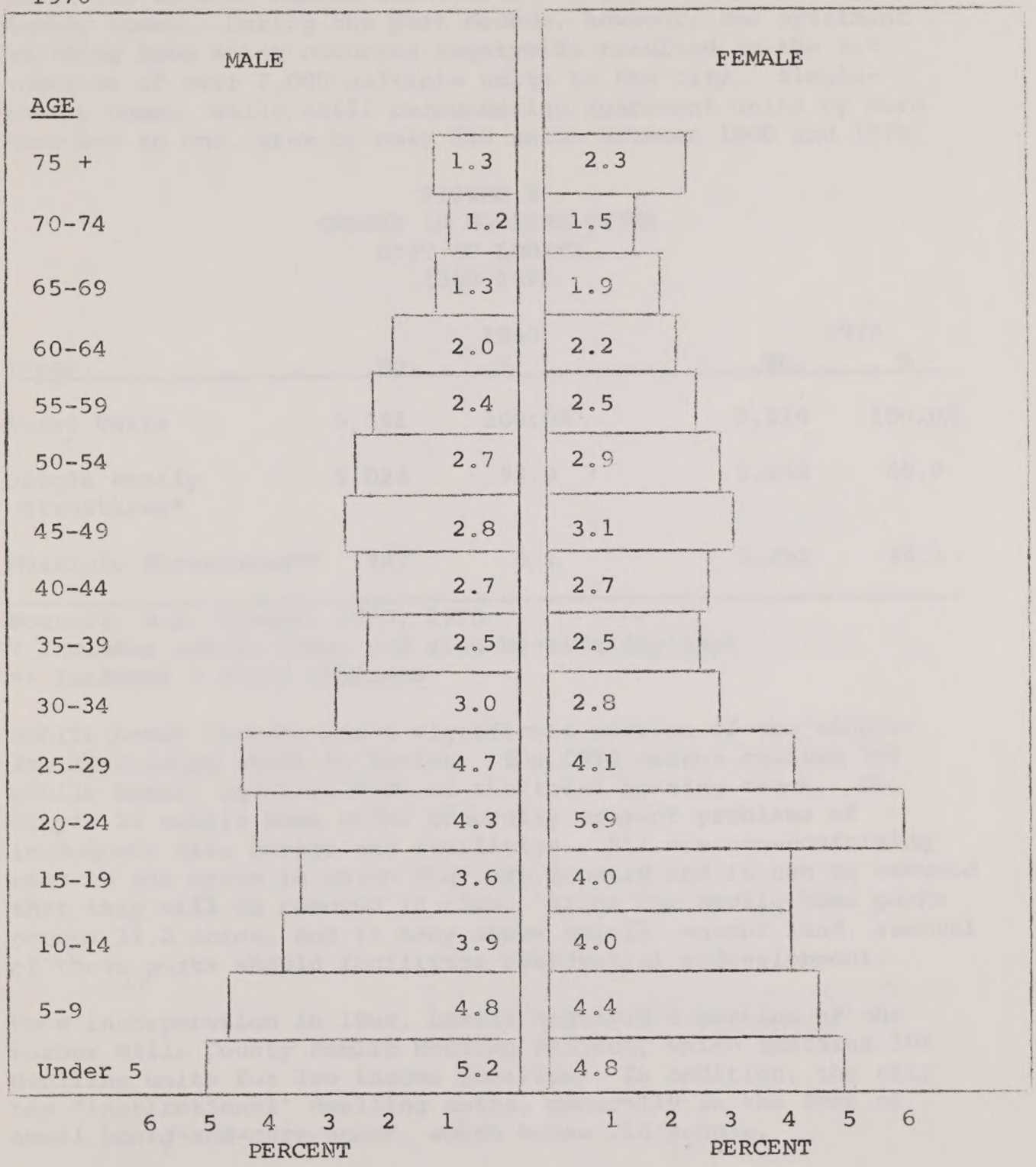
The diversity of South Bay industry is reflected in the employment of Lomita residents. In 1960, the greatest number of citizens (almost 40%) were involved in manufacturing of some type. Wholesale and retail trade employed 17%, service industries 16%, and government 10% of the city's workers. Most of the labor force in 1960 worked for wages or salary rather than being self-employed, and most worked outside the city. Almost one-third of Lomita's female residents over the age of 14 years were employed in 1960, and 60% of these were married women.

FIGURE I

POPULATION OF LOMITA

BY AGE AND SEX

1970



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS, 1970

THE HOUSING STOCK

Dwelling Unit Types

Until the 1960's, Lomita was overwhelmingly a city of single-family homes. During the past decade, however, the apartment building boom which occurred countywide resulted in the net addition of over 2,000 multiple units to the city. Single-family homes, while still outnumbering apartment units by more than two to one, grew by only 228 units between 1960 and 1970.

FIGURE 2
CHANGE IN HOUSING TYPES
CITY OF LOMITA
1960-1970

Types	1960 No.	1960 %	1970 No.	1970 %
Total Units	5,351	100.0%	7,514	100.0%
Single Family Structures*	5,024	93.9	5,252	69.9
Multiple Structures**	327	6.1	2,262	30.1

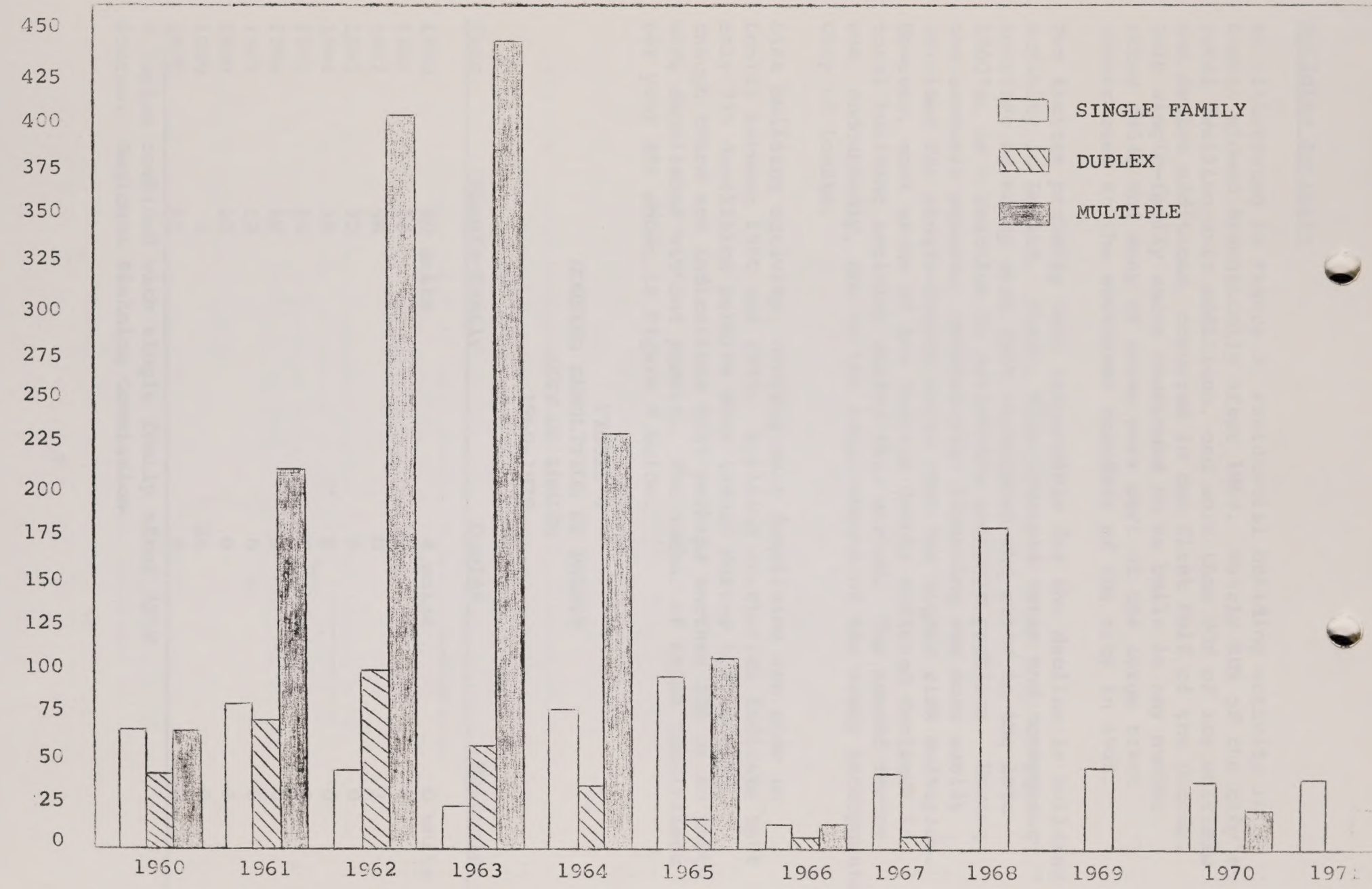
Source: U.S. Census, 1960, 1970
* Includes mobile homes and side-by-side duplexes
** Includes 2 story duplexes

Mobile homes account for a significant portion of the single-family housing stock in Lomita. The 1970 census counted 707 mobile homes, equaling 9.4% of the total housing stock. The city's 23 mobile home parks generally present problems of inadequate site design and facilities. All are non-conforming uses in the areas in which they are located and it can be assumed that they will be removed in time. Since the mobile home parks occupy 31.2 acres, and in many cases adjoin vacant land, removal of these parks should facilitate residential redevelopment.

Upon incorporation in 1964, Lomita acquired a portion of the Harbor Hills County Public Housing Project, which contains 301 dwelling units for low income families. In addition, the city has "institutional" dwelling units, generally in the form of small board-and-care homes, which house 214 people.

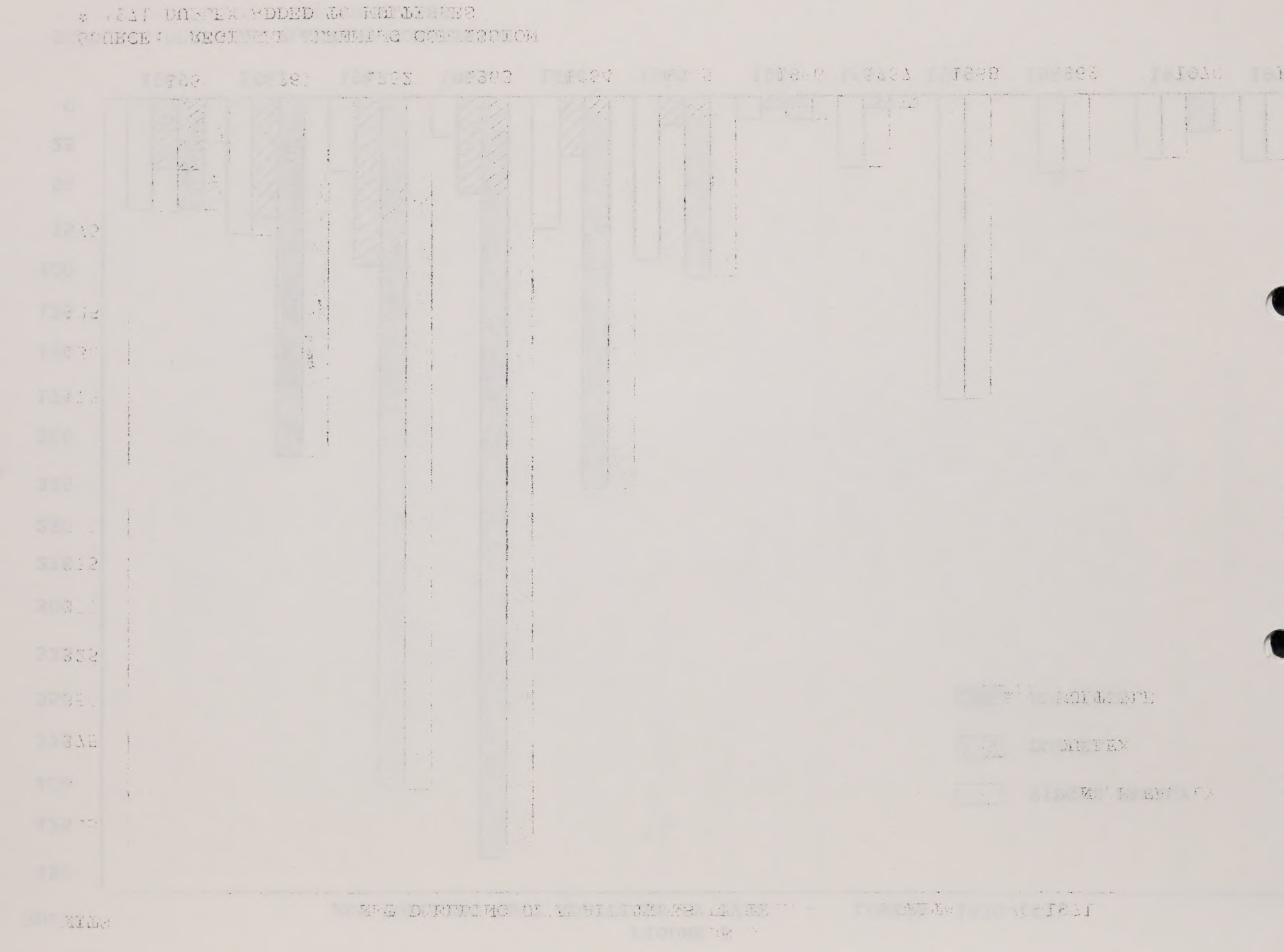
FIGURE 3

NET DWELLING UNIT ADDITIONS BY TYPE - LOMITA 1970-1971



SOURCE: REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

* 1971 DUPLEX ADDED TO MULTIPLES



Building Activity

As illustrated in Figure 3, residential building activity in Lomita slowed dramatically after 1964. Nearly 80% of the city's total dwelling unit additions, and more than 90% of its multiple and duplex additions, occurred in the first half of the decade. Only single-family units continued to be built in any number after 1964, and many of these were part of the large tract constructed at the southeast boundary of the city in 1968.

Two factors probably were responsible for the decline in building activity in Lomita. First, high interest rates and consequent shortage of money were felt throughout the state in the late 1960's, as a reaction to nationwide economic problems. During the economic squeeze, construction financing was more easily obtained for single-family units than for higher risk multiples. However, most areas of Los Angeles County suffered declines in total building activity during this period. The second factor was, undoubtedly, due to the requirements of the newly incorporated City of Lomita.

Like building activity, housing unit demolition was slow in Lomita between 1960 and 1970. Building statistics indicate that only 335 demolition permits were issued during this period, though there are indications that perhaps another 100 or so units were demolished without permit. The number of known demolitions per year are shown in Figure 4 below.

FIGURE 4
HOUSING DEMOLITION BY PERMIT
CITY OF LOMITA
1960-1970

Year	Single-Family	Duplex	Multiple
1960	50 units	4 units	0 units
1961	16	2	0
1962	58	8	3
1963	32	2	0
1964	36	8	0
1965	24	0	0
1966	18	2	0
1967	12	0	0
1968	22	6	3
1969	3	26	0
1970	12	*	0

* Duplex combined with single family after 1969
Source: Regional Planning Commission

Year	Population	Births
1950	10 units	0 units
1951	12	2
1952	15	3
1953	18	3
1954	20	2
1955	23	3
1956	24	1
1957	25	1
1958	26	1
1959	27	1
1960	28	1

None of these removals was necessitated by construction of public facilities, streets or freeways. Most of them were old, deteriorated or dilapidated units removed to facilitate new construction or brought about through building code enforcement procedures. The future demolition rate of obsolete housing should be higher than it has been in the past ten years if rapid aging of the total housing stock is to be prevented.

Housing Size and Occupancy

Lomita housing units are generally small. The census shows that in 1970 they contained a median 4.2 rooms in comparison to the countywide median of 4.5 rooms. Owner-occupied units (mainly single-family homes) contained a median 5.0 rooms; renter units (mainly apartments) a median 3.9 rooms.

The city's housing units are similarly limited in bedrooms. Because kitchen, living room, and bathroom account for three of the rooms counted by the census, only a median 2.0 rooms are left as bedrooms in single-family homes, and a median 0.9 rooms are left as bedrooms in apartment units.

In 1960, approximately 84% of all housing units in the city had one bathroom, 5% had shared or no bathroom facilities, and only 11% had more than one bathroom. Housing units built between 1960 and 1970 included a small number of single-family, multi-bathroom homes and a large number of apartment and duplex units, generally containing only one bath.

In summary, the figures above indicate that the Lomita housing stock contains a large percentage of one or two bedroom, one bathroom homes of the type commonly built just before and after World War II. Units of this age not only tend to lack size but probably are deficient in the amenities which housing consumers now seek. These factors tend to make such units increasingly less competitive in the real estate market.

Also related to the increased number of apartment units in the city is the decrease in number of people per living unit. In 1960, an average 2.9 persons occupied each housing unit. In 1970, the overall average declined to 2.7 persons per unit.

Housing Tenure and Vacancy

The number of owner-occupied housing units in Lomita declined from 56.3% in 1960 to 42.3% in 1970. The corresponding increase in renter-occupied units is a result of apartment growth.

However, when occupancy is examined in terms of single-family homes only, a problem becomes evident. It appears from 1970 Census figures that almost 47% of the single-family homes in the city are occupied by renters. The absentee owners of these homes, who presumably live outside the city, often lack the homeowner's traditional concern with municipal affairs. Additionally, absentee owners are less likely to be responsive to or even aware of maintenance and repair problems.

At the time of the 1970 census, Lomita had an overall vacancy rate of 4.5%, a figure close to the 5% considered necessary to provide an adequate choice for those changing their place of residence. The vacancy rate on units for sale was 2.5%, a figure which also is nearly adequate. Lomita's favorable vacancy rate, is produced by the fact that in the past ten years the number of housing units has grown at a faster rate than the population - - dwelling units having increased by 40% during this decade, while population grew by only 29%.

Cost of Housing

In the past ten years, housing shortages and inflation have had spectacular effects on the cost of housing throughout Los Angeles County. Cost increases are especially apparent in Lomita, where several specific factors have operated to bring the city's rent and value from below the county median in 1960 to above it in 1970. (See Figures 5 and 6)

FIGURE 5
CHANGE IN MEDIAN VALUE OF OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING 1960-1970
LOMITA-LOS ANGELES COUNTY

	1960	1970	% Change
Lomita	$15,100	$26,380	+74.7%
Los Angeles County	15,900	24,270	+52.6

Source: U.S. Census 1960, 1970

FIGURE 6
CHANGE IN RENT OF RENTER OCCUPIED HOUSING 1960-1970
LOMITA-LOS ANGELES COUNTY

	1960	1970	% Change
Lomita	$70	$125	+78.6%
Los Angeles County	81	110	+35.8

Source: U.S. Census 1960, 1970

Cost of Living

The desirability of the entire South Bay region, with its diversified industry and generally low densities, has resulted in rapid population growth and consequent housing shortages over the past ten years. These shortages have increased the value of housing throughout the region. Also, the city's incorporation in 1964 reassured residents and potential buyers that housing and neighborhood conditions would be improved and protected. Public confidence has worked to reinforce the desirability and value of the city's housing.

The increased median value of single-family housing is partially due to construction of new units which are larger and have more bedrooms, bathrooms and modern amentities than the majority of previously existing homes. An outstanding example of this is the 211 unit single-family housing tract built in 1968 in the southern part of the city. These three to five bedroom units reportedly ranged in price from $35,000 to $45,000.

At the time of the 1970 census, there were 72 vacant-for-sale homes in the city. The median asking price for these homes according to the census was $37,500, a price considerably higher than the $26,380 median value of all owner-occupied homes. While the asking price is often higher than eventual sale price, it is significant that the vacant-for-sale homes were larger than the city's median housing size. Only nine of the 72 vacant-for-sale homes were priced under $20,000.

Housing Condition

An informal survey of Lomita indicates that the quality of housing is generally good, but mixed land use, lack of sidewalks, yard conditions, and other neighborhood problems tend to decrease the overall desirability of some areas. However, objective measures bear out the impression of high overall housing quality.

Both the 1960 U.S. Census and the 1969 State Department of Finance Special Census of Lomita included direct measures of housing condition. Both defined deteriorated housing as that which needs more repair than would be provided in the course of normal maintenance and which has one or more defects which must be corrected if the unit is to continue to provide safe and adequate shelter. Dilapidated housing is defined as that which requires extensive repair or rebuilding and which does not provide safe and adequate shelter. In Figure 7, below, the 1969 Special Census percentages of deteriorated and dilapidated housing have been used to derive estimates of the same measures for 1970.

FIGURE 7
CONDITION OF HOUSING
CITY OF LOMITA
1960 - 1970

	1960		ESTIMATED 1970	
	No. Units	% of Total Units	No. Units	% of Total Units
Total Units	5,351	100%	7,514	100%
Sound	4,880	91.3	7,281	96.9
Deteriorated	421	7.9	210	2.8
Dilapidated	41	0.8	23	0.3

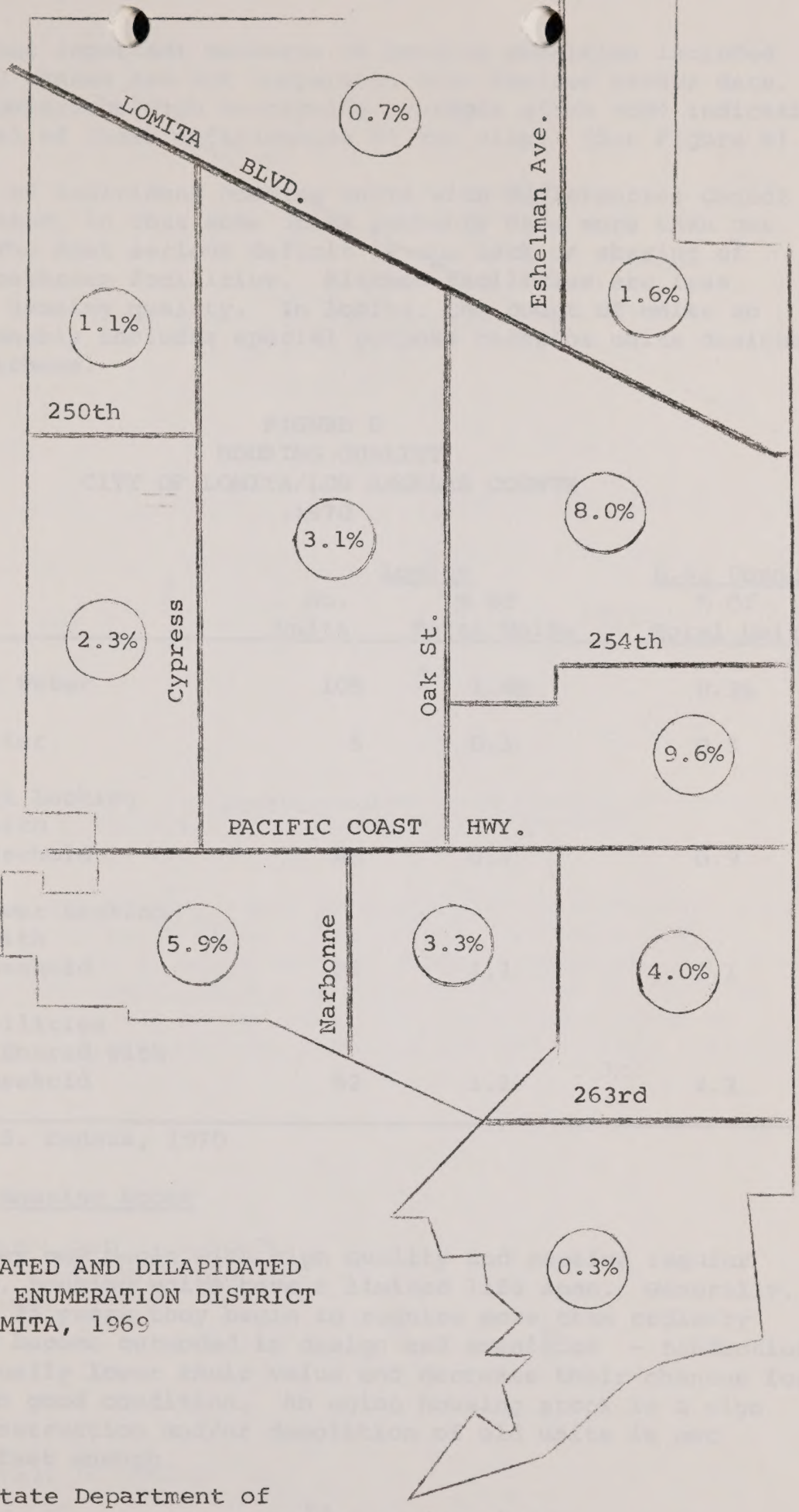
Source: U. S. Census, 1960
1970 Estimated from State Department of Finance Special Census of Lomita, 1969

Because the 1970 figures are estimates, some care must be exercised in their interpretation. The results, however, do indicate both a decreased percentage and a decreased number of housing units in trouble.

The map following, based on the 1969 Special Census, indicates the percentage range of deteriorated and dilapidated units in various areas of the city.

Due to changes in census reporting format, only two measures of housing quality were directly comparable between 1960 and 1970. The first of these, obviously important because of its relation to sanitation, health and actual liveability of housing units, is the count of units lacking some or all plumbing facilities. In 1960, 5% of the housing stock (273 units) lacked some element of plumbing. By 1970, this figure had declined to 2% of the entire stock, or 153 units.

Overcrowding, defined as more than one person per room in a housing unit, is another general, though indirect measure of housing quality. Lomita housing units were more overcrowded than the countywide average in 1960, but less overcrowded than the county. During this decade, overcrowded units declined from 11.6% to 6.4% of the total housing stock in Lomita.



% DETERIORATED AND DILAPIDATED HOUSING BY ENUMERATION DISTRICT CITY OF LOMITA, 1969

Source: State Department of Finance Special Census of Lomita, 1969

Several other important measures of housing condition included in the 1970 census are not comparable with earlier census data. However, comparison with countywide averages gives some indication of the level of these deficiencies in the city. (See Figure 8)

The number of individual housing units with deficiencies cannot be accumulated, in that some units probably have more than one problem. The most serious deficit is the lack or sharing of water and bathroom facilities. Kitchen facilities are less crucial to housing quality. In Lomita, the count of units so lacking probably includes special purpose bachelor units designed without kitchens.

FIGURE 8
HOUSING QUALITY
CITY OF LOMITA/LOS ANGELES COUNTY
1970

	Lomita		L.A. County
	No. Units	% Of Total Units	% Of Total Units
Lacking Hot Water	106	1.4%	0.3%
No Piped Water	5	0.1	0.5
Flush Toilet Lacking or Shared with Another Household	48	0.7	0.9
Bath or Shower Lacking or Shared with Another Household	81	1.1	1.1
Kitchen Facilities Lacking or Shared With Another Household	82	1.1	2.2

Source: U.S. Census, 1970

Age of the Housing Stock

Although they may begin with high quality and receive regular maintenance, housing units have a limited life span. Generally, after 20 to 25 years they begin to require more than ordinary repairs and become outmoded in design and amenities - tendencies which eventually lower their value and decrease their chances for remaining in good condition. An aging housing stock is a sign that new construction and/or demolition of old units is not proceeding fast enough.

HOUSING RELATED PROBLEMS

Land Use

Its inconsistent land use pattern is one of Lomita's most difficult problems. While some neighborhoods do present a coherent residential pattern, more often single-family homes are intermixed with apartment buildings and trailer parks or are surrounded by industrial and commercial uses. Both single-family homes and apartment buildings front on major streets such as Pacific Coast Highway and Lomita Boulevard.

Because it was originally subdivided along rural lines, whole sections of the city contain lots which are relatively narrow and range to 400 feet in depth. The characteristic building pattern on these lots has been that of a single family home fronting on the street portion of the lot, with a large vacant area behind. Over the years, one or two additional houses or multiple units were added at the rear of the original house, and the street access was provided by a long, narrow driveway. This arrangement does not meet current city codes and does not conform to generally accepted standards of residential design. However, because many owners purchased these lots with the idea of "adding on" and because much of the city's vacant residential land is enclosed within the lots, it is important that acceptable and feasible site design techniques be found so that proper development can occur. In some cases, especially near the western border of the city, removal of a few of the older houses would open up relatively large vacant residential sites.

Current residential zoning in Lomita bears little resemblance to current residential land use. There are more single-family homes in multiple zones than there are apartments, and, as illustrated in Figure 10, the city is currently overzoned for apartments. In line with preserving Lomita's low density residential character, the General Plan proposes a reduction in multiple zoning and a corresponding increase in single-family, low density zoning to reflect existing land use patterns.

FIGURE 10
LAND USE AND ZONING
CITY OF LOMITA

	Current Land Use in Acres	Current Zoning in Acres	Proposed Zoning In Acres
Single Family (including duplex)	508.3	604.1	688.3
Multiple	124.0	185.5	73.4

Source: Lomita General Plan 1966

While Lomita's land use problems might eventually be resolved through tight zoning controls and gradual recycling of land, this is a very lengthy process. Many land use problems stem from the presence of apartments in single-family neighborhoods. As these apartments are of fairly recent vintage, it will be some time before the land they occupy can be turned back to single-family use. More immediate removal can be visualized for the 23 existing trailer parks which occupy 31 of the city's acres.

Water Supply

Lomita's water system was built to meet low density, rural needs. The influx of population and housing units in recent years has begun to place a strain on the system, so that in some locations the flow of water is not entirely adequate during peak hours. Additionally, Fire Department fire-flow requirements cannot be met in some areas. According to a recent report by the County Engineer, the fire-flow problem is most severe in those areas zoned for variable-density residential use. In these areas, 58% of the existing water mains do not meet minimum fire-flow requirements. In agricultural and single-family zoned areas, 30% of the mains are not up to Fire Department standards.

For residents of those areas affected, the lack of adequate water supply is not only a nuisance but a potential hazard in case of fire. The water shortage also will increasingly act as a barrier to future development, especially of multiple units, in those parts of the city in which it is most severe.

Proposed Freeway Construction

For the past several years, the State Division of Highways has considered possible routes for a proposed east-west freeway linking the Harbor and San Diego Freeways. Each of the basic proposed routes would have considerable impact on Lomita. According to preliminary studies by the Division of Highways, the northernmost route, running several blocks north and parallel to Lomita Boulevard, would require removal of 104 single-family and 11 multiple units in the city. The two routes which would run south of Pacific Coast Highway would necessitate 47 single-family and four multiple family removals. Each of the proposed routes would be constructed within residential neighborhoods, so that homes and apartments not removed would be subjected to the noise, dust, exhaust fumes and other pollutants generated by freeways.

Natural Hazards

Drainage in Lomita is reasonably adequate, so that the city is not subject to major flooding during storms. In one area of the city, near Western Avenue and 263rd Street, a drainage problem now exists, but proposed improvements to the flood control system are expected to correct this situation. The city is not especially prone to fire danger. Some chance of fire is present in the city's deteriorated housing units, but because densities are low, control of fires should not present a major problem.

Lomita shares with the rest of California the hazard of earthquakes. The Inglewood-Newport Fault runs north-south and to the east of the city, while the Palos Verdes Fault, generally following the base of the Palos Verdes Hills, actually runs through the southwest corner of Lomita. Significant movement along these or other more remote fault lines could cause damage to dwellings in the city.

HOUSING NEEDS

Current Housing Needs

Demand for various types and sizes of housing is ideally determined by the needs and desires of the population: families generally desire single-family homes and need greater numbers of bedrooms and bathrooms; single people and senior citizens tend to prefer smaller homes or rental units.

Lomita has traditionally been a single-family residential city, and there has been a definite indication that most of the population continue to desire this housing type. In the 1969 Special Census, one of the questions asked of Lomita residents was: "What is your choice for housing?" Over 82% of the respondents indicated a preference for single-family homes. Yet, in 1970, only 56% of the housing units in the city were of this type.

Over the past ten years, Lomita has experienced a significant increase in apartment units, but a decrease of population in those age groups (45 - 65+) which might be expected to desire apartment living. On the other hand, over 1,700 individuals in the child-bearing age group (20-44) were added to the population in the past decade, along with almost 3,000 school-age children. During this period, however, only 227 one-unit structures were added to the city's housing stock, and some of these were mobile homes. (Lomita's mobile homes tend to be of the older, smaller variety, and mobile home parks in the city generally do not contain facilities for children.)

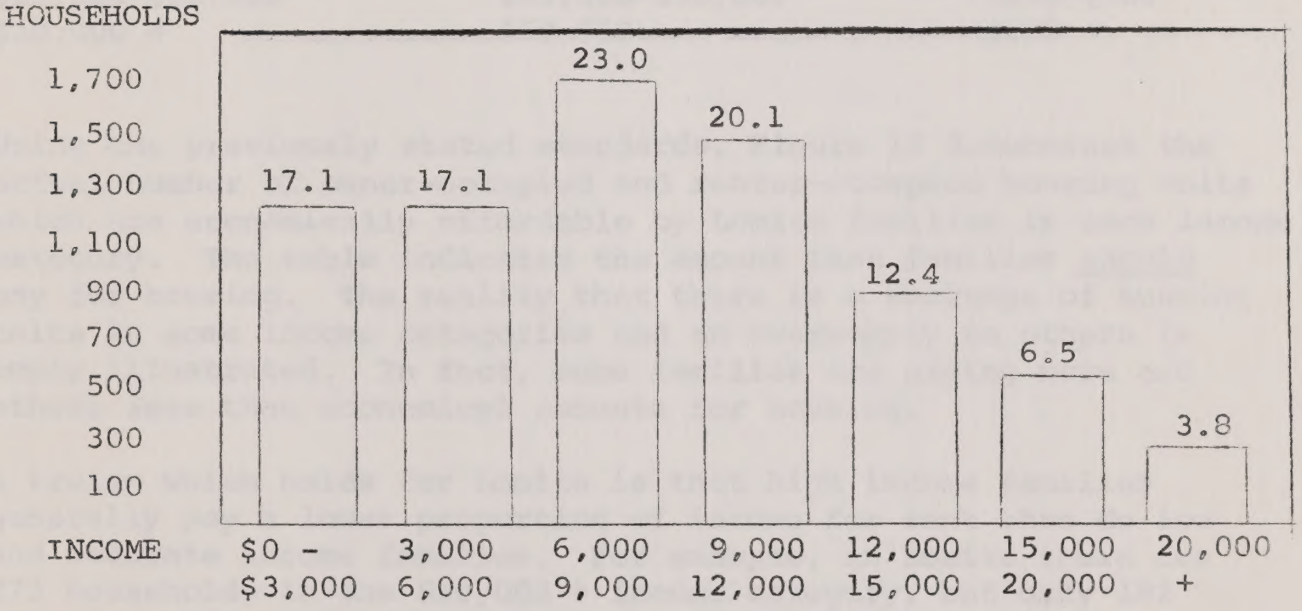
Lomita's median household size in 1970 was 2.7 persons. This moderate household size, combined with the large number of persons in the family-rearing age group, indicates a need for housing units containing a sizeable number of bedrooms. This need was confirmed by the 1969 Special Census, in which more than 88% of the respondents indicated a desire for housing containing two or more bedrooms. A large proportion of the city's single-family housing stock, however, is of the one or two bedroom variety. Of the approximately 600 single-family homes built in the 1960's, most do contain more than two bedrooms. But, these units tend to be the most expensive in the city and are, therefore, unavailable to the majority of citizens. Apartment units in Lomita generally are small in overall size, limited in number of bedrooms, and provide no special facilities for children or for senior citizens.

Another component of overall housing need is the necessity for housing in specified locations - close to transportation, shopping, schools and jobs. Because Lomita is small in area and primarily residential, many of these needs are currently satisfied at locations outside the city. For the majority of residents who

drive automobiles, transportation is not a major problem. Senior citizens, however, who often do not drive, should be located in close proximity to the major highways which traverse or adjoin the city, so that bus transportation will be more accessible. As most of the future commercial development in the city will be located on its major streets, housing locations near them would be of additional benefit to the elderly.

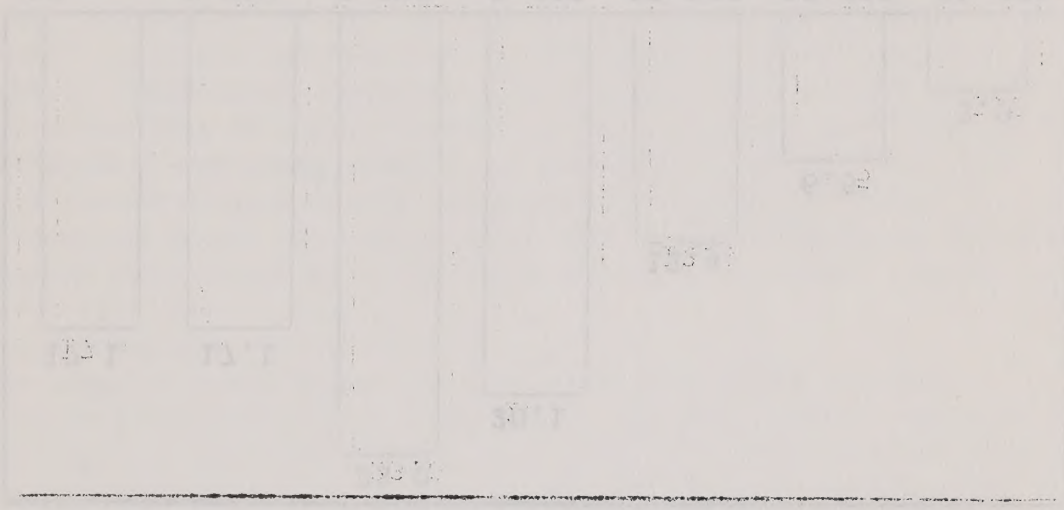
In summary, it appears that the demand for at least moderate size single-family homes and apartments is not being met in Lomita. Economic circumstances, however, influence housing demand - often limiting the type and size of housing that families can afford. It becomes relevant then to investigate the price of available housing stock in relation to the income level of the city's population. Figure 11 illustrates 1968 household income for Lomita. In this year, 57% of the city's households earned less than $9,000 per year, while only about 4% earned more than $20,000. Median income was slightly above $8,000 per year.

FIGURE 11
HOUSEHOLD INCOME
CITY OF LOMITA
1968



SOURCE: STATE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE, SPECIAL CENSUS OF LOMITA

Because of the high number of households in the lower income ranges, it is important that a large percentage of the city's housing units be low in cost. Shortages of housing within economical price ranges mean families will be forced to pay inequitable amounts for rent or will be faced with acceptance of inadequate or deteriorating housing units.



Using a generally accepted rule of thumb, it may be assumed that families will be granted mortgages to purchase homes costing not more than 2-1½ times their gross yearly income. Although rent is less controlled, it is assumed that families should not pay more than 25% of their gross monthly income for rent. In Figure 12 below, various income categories are matched to the amounts which families should not pay for housing. For example, a family earning between $6,000 and $9,000 per year can "afford" to purchase a home with a value between $15,000 and $20,000. The same family can afford rent of $100 to $150 per month.

FIGURE 12
INCOME AND COST OF HOUSING
CITY OF LOMITA

Annual Household Income	Affordable Housing Property Value	Monthly Rent
$0-$3,000	Less than $5,000	Less than $40
$3,000-$6,000	$5,000-$15,000	$40-$100
$6,000-$9,000	$15,000-$20,000	$100-$150
$9,000-$12,000	$20,000-$25,000	$150-$200
$12,000-$15,000	$25,000-$35,000	$200-$250
$15,000-$20,000	$35,000-$50,000	$250-$300
$20,000 +	$50,000 +	$300 +

Using the previously stated standards, Figure 13 determines the actual number of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units which are economically affordable by Lomita families in each income category. The table indicates the amount that families <u>should</u> pay for housing. The reality that there is a shortage of housing units in some income categories and an oversupply in others is amply illustrated. In fact, some families are paying more and others less than economical amounts for housing.

A truism which holds for Lomita is that high income families generally pay a lower proportion of income for rent than do low and moderate income families. For example, in Lomita there are 273 households in the $20,000 + income category, but only 192 housing units fall into the corresponding rent and value ranges ($50,000+ value and $300+ rent). Those 81 households who cannot find Lomita housing in this price range must be paying less - possibly by choice and possibly not. On the other hand, there are 1,227 households in the $0-$3,000 income range, but there are only 144 housing units which they can afford. The remaining 1,083 households in this lowest income category have two apparent choices: (1) To pay more than 25% of their gross income for rent or (2) to double-up with other families in order to pay for higher cost living units. (Families at this income level, by doubling up, may account for a significant proportion of the city's 482 over-crowded housing units.

FIGURE 13

AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING UNITS BY INCOME
CITY OF LOMITA, 1970

INCOME		NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS					
Range	No. Households	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Vacant	Total	APPARENT SHORTAGE	APPARENT OVERSUPPLY
$0 - $3,000	1,227	13	120	11	144	1,083	
$3 - $6,000	1,227	224	1,008	49	1,281		54
$6 - $9,000	1,651	565	2,035	114	2,714		1,063
$9 - $12,000	1,443	654	715	68	1,437	6	
$12- $15,000	890	959	52	26	1,037		147
$15- $20,000	467	603	51	55	709		242
$20,000 +	273	159	20	13	192	81	

SOURCE: DERIVED FROM U. S. CENSUS, 1970
SPECIAL CENSUS OF LOMITA, 1969

Additionally, since there are few single-family homes in price ranges affordable by those earning less than $6,000 per year, it would appear that many of the city's low and moderate income families are currently to be found in rental housing.

The apparent shortage of housing for low income families in Lomita is minimized by one consideration: the high number of senior citizens in the city's population. The majority of senior citizens live on limited and fixed incomes, often under $3,000 per year. Although census reports do not permit direct measurement, it is probably safe to assume that there are 600 to 700 senior citizen households with current incomes in the lowest category. These households would, therefore, account for somewhere near half of the city's low income residents. Many, however, are owners of higher value housing which was purchased in earlier, higher-income years. As current owners of paid-for housing, these households present no unfilled housing demand. In fact, they reduce the apparent low income housing shortage from about 1,100 units to about 400-500 units.

Although definitive numbers have been determined as to shortages of housing units, these statistics must be regarded as general guidelines and not as specific conclusions. With a lack of data in the 1970 Federal census, specifically relating income of individuals to households, it was necessary to utilize income data from the 1969 Special Census of Lomita. Due to the effects of inflation and heavy low income transciency, many of the common data points do not correlate in these censuses.

Future Housing Needs

We estimate that Lomita can expect the net addition of 2,000 to 2,400 housing units in the next twenty years. Approximately 1,400 of these units probably will be constructed on land now vacant or occupied by trailer parks, and the others should result from more efficient development of land currently occupied by housing or other uses. If household size remains at about 2.7 persons, these additional housing units would result in a total Lomita population of 25,000 to 26,000 by 1990. This is expected because of city policies relating to maintenance of low densities.

The above projection is based on the following assumptions regarding population growth, construction and demolition:

1. Although the South Bay and South Coast areas will remain among Los Angeles County's faster growing regions, county growth as a whole is expected to slow dramatically in the next twenty years.

2. The gradual revision of zoning and the controls on building in Lomita will limit extensive construction of apartment units and add-on units in deep lots. Limitations in water supply will have the same effect, especially in the current decade. Demolition of old, deteriorated housing units will gradually increase. Most of the demolished units will be single-family homes, and replacement units will generally retain a low density character.

It may be expected that construction volume and population growth will be slower during the 1970's than during the 1980's, due both to nationwide economic conditions and to local city problems.

It is probable that the total minority population in Lomita will increase in the coming years, and that Spanish surname residents will continue to be the largest minority group. Lomita's minority population appears well integrated into the community. The city's major housing deficiencies stem not from minorities but from the presence of low and moderate income families whose housing needs are currently being met with inadequate or high priced housing. While overall income levels will certainly rise in the next twenty years, the proportion of the population in the lowest income groups cannot be expected to change significantly. Therefore, with a population of 25,000 by 1990, Lomita might have a low and moderate income housing shortage of 500 to 625 units unless steps are taken to meet the need.

Our analysis indicates that in order to meet future city needs, new apartment development should be divided among two and three bedroom, two bath family units, and small one bedroom and efficiency units.

HOUSING GOALS

Taking into consideration the historically rural-like nature and atmosphere of Lomita and its surrounding areas, as well as the expressed feelings and desires of many of its citizens, it is fitting that the City of Lomita should establish housing goals which are in harmony with the past and the future. Therefore, the following housing goals are presented in order to provide and insure adequate housing for all citizens of Lomita regardless of age, income, race or ethnic background:

1. To preserve the low and medium density residential character of the city.

2. To encourage a diversity of housing types, sizes, locations and costs in order to meet the needs of a socially and economically heterogeneous population and to promote and insure open and free choice of housing for all.

3. To insure separation of conflicting land uses and housing types through strict land use controls.

4. To encourage the use of flexible and innovative techniques of site and housing design within the framework of the zoning ordinance and building code in order to make better use of land and to reduce housing costs.

5. To increase the safety and healthfulness of housing by correcting blighted neighborhood conditions.

6. To promote neighborhood pride and identification and to encourage property owners to maintain the appearance and quality of housing through city beautification programs.

7. To protect the quality of the sound housing stock and to rehabilitate or redevelop substandard, dilapidated and non-conforming dwelling units.

8. To insure the adequacy and proximity of those services and facilities which contribute to a safe, convenient and enjoyable living environment.

9. To implement the programs and procedures necessary to carry out the objectives of the General Plan.

10. To encourage an increase in the ratio of owner occupied vs. rental housing as essential to neighborhood pride and identification.

IMPLEMENTATION

This section of the Housing Element presents possible solutions to the housing problems and deficiencies analyzed earlier in the Element. It recognizes the limitations of funding and jurisdictional authority which act as constraints to city programs. It also realizes that some problems, like increasing land and construction costs and limitations of income, are national in scope and beyond the control of any local authority. Within these constraints, therefore, the implementation section addresses itself to definite and realistic actions which can be taken by the City of Lomita to fulfill its housing goals.

Development of Sound Land Use and Zoning

The city has been confronted with land use and zoning problems which, unless corrected, will result in a greatly increased population and high residential densities by 1990. The General Plan recognized these hazards and proposed a zoning plan which would separate incompatible land uses and maintain the single family character of the city. The Planning Commission and the City Council have been actively engaged in the revisions of zoning necessary to implement this plan. In one action indirectly related to housing, the Commission rezoned approximately 75% of the city's industrially zoned land to commercial-general. The City should continue to pursue its implementation of the General Plan and take the actions necessary to maintain the densities recommended therein - seven units per net acre for low density zoning and 14 per acre for medium density. Higher density development proposals should be carefully evaluated to insure that they provide more than minimum size and open space.

Lomita should seek innovative solutions to the problem of development on the city's deep lots. In a few areas it may be possible to run local streets through the vacant parts of these large parcels. More practical, however, may be the use of cul-de-sac streets which produce more buildable area.

Protection and Improvement of the Housing Stock

Lomita is fortunate in having a housing stock with relatively high overall quality. Only a little over 3% of the city's housing units are known to be deteriorated or dilapidated. In order to protect residential property values, to assure safe and healthful housing, and to preserve the tax base, it is important that health and buidling codes be carefully enforced. The Health Department conducts twice-yearly inspections of apartment units in the city to insure compliance with the health code. Health

inspections of single family housing, however, are carried out only on receipt of complaints. Enforcement of housing codes in Lomita is the responsibility of the City Engineer, who also has been able to make inspections only on a complaint basis. Since complaints are generally received only on obviously unsound houses, minor repair and health problems may escape detection until they have become major in nature and expensive to correct.

Lomita should establish systematic programs for enforcement of health and housing codes. Inspections of obviously deteriorated or dilapidated housing should be carried out first. Following this, units 10 years or older should be examined. Such a program would probably require the full-time services of one or more housing code inspectors. Inspectors should be able to provide owners with suggestions on the level and cost of work needed and of loan opportunities. Of course owners should be given ample time to make the necessary repairs.

Meeting Specialized Housing Needs

Lomita has two groups of citizens with specialized housing needs - the elderly and those of low and moderate income. Families with incomes of less than $9,000 (57% of the city's households) simply will not be able to afford the cost of new housing provided by private industry. Therefore, protection of the existing, lower-cost housing stock through code enforcement and rehabilitation becomes of prime importance, because these units provide affordable housing for the city's low and moderate income families and its elderly residents.

It is recognized that current and foreseeable land and building costs preclude the building of sound homes or rental units at a cost below the guidelines of households with incomes less than $3,000. For those families currently paying too much for housing, and for the city's future low and moderate income residents, means will have to be found to assure provision of affordable housing. In this regard, the city should consider those federal programs which assist low and moderate income home ownership or provide rent supplements. These programs generally apply to elderly citizens as well. Projects of this type which meet the zoning and development standards of the city should be welcomed. In addition, the City Engineer should be alert to innovations in building techniques and materials which would lower the cost of new housing.

The city should encourage construction of family type or garden apartment units with play facilities for children, as well as smaller apartment units for elderly residents. Apartment housing for senior citizens in RVD zones adjacent to commercial development and to transportation should be encouraged. The city's medium density zone classifications should be adequate for these purposes.

Insuring the Adequacy of Services and Facilities

Lomita is located within a thriving metropolitan region where most necessities - shopping, medical care, industry, and the like - are abundant and accessible. Services such as police and fire protection, libraries, and trash collection generally are meeting the needs of the city's residents.

Lomita has an excellent park program. Lomita Park is heavily used, well maintained, and has received many improvements. Because large open land areas are not available for future park development, the use of low cost "mini-parks" should be encouraged. While providing minimal facilities, these small parks would improve the overall appearance of the city and would provide necessary open space. Such a park is now being developed in the city.

Water supply is Lomita's major service problem. Lack of water at peak hours is a nuisance and a potential danger. To meet the needs of Lomita residents, the County Waterworks District has devised a thirteen-year water improvements program. Under this long term plan, water mains will be enlarged in most areas of the city. The city should investigate the acceptability to residents of increasing water rates and taxes in order to provide capital funds to speed up this program.

City Beautification

Lomita possesses many citizens' groups which have been or could become involved in city beautification activities. The city should take the lead in planning a comprehensive program and in determining sources of funding, including the possibility of federal funds. Park and street improvements currently being made might provide an impetus and a starting point for beautification. Additional activities could include tree planting on a large scale, yard cleanup, house painting, and ecology programs. Improvements should not be limited to residential areas, and a special attempt should be made to assist low income, elderly and infirm residents who are unable to participate actively in the various programs.

CONCLUSIONS

The housing element makes reference to land use and zoning, property maintenance, code enforcement and neighborhood beautification programs. Basically, these programs are intended to provide the means for the upkeep of the existing housing stock, as well as the correction of building code deficiencies in neighborhoods where some homes have been allowed to deteriorate. These programs call for a systematic inspection process involving all residential property in the city over an extended period of time. Such programs can often reverse the deterioration of neighborhoods if they are implemented promptly and effectively.

Neighborhood rehabilitation programs involve detailed studies of housing conditions in each area. If a neighborhood has been designated for rehabilitation, all dwellings within the area should be inspected and recommendations should be made to the property owners as to the work required to bring the structures up to code standards.

The betterment activities should not end with the rehabilitation of buildings. Public improvements such as street construction, street lighting, street tree planting and utility undergrounding may also be undertaken to improve the environment.

The City of Lomita should work diligently to reach the housing goals enumerated in this Housing Element of the General Plan. Steps should be taken in the near future to implement an effective program which will help to continue the "good life" for citizens of Lomita.

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